

CLAIMS

I claim:

1. An accessory mounting system for interconnecting an accessory with a vehicle, comprising:

at least one link member;

a vertical pivot member mounted to the link member for horizontal movement, wherein the accessory is interconnected with the vertical pivot member; and

a mounting member interconnected with the vehicle for vertical movement, wherein the link member is interconnected with the mounting member.

2. A system for mounting an accessory to a vehicle, comprising:

a linkage arrangement defining an inner end and an outer end;

an accessory mounted to the outer end of the linkage arrangement for pivoting movement about a first vertical axis; and

a linkage mounting arrangement for mounting the inner end of the linkage arrangement to the vehicle for pivoting movement about a second vertical axis spaced from the first vertical axis, wherein the linkage arrangement is constructed and arranged to provide vertical movement of the accessory.

3. The accessory mounting system of claim 2, wherein the linkage mounting arrangement is constructed and arranged to enable the linkage arrangement and the accessory to be moved to either a first side of the vehicle or a second side of the vehicle.

4. The system of claim 2, wherein:
the linkage arrangement comprises an upper link member and a lower link member;
the inner end comprises upper and lower brackets, pivot plates, and pivot pins;
the outer end comprises upper and lower brackets, pivot plates, and pivot pins; and
the outer end further comprises a vertical pivot bar.
5. The system of claim 4, wherein the orientation of brackets, pivot plates, and pivot pins on the inner end allows the link members to pivot vertically.
6. The system of claim 4, wherein the vertical pivot bar allows the accessory to move horizontally.
7. The system of claim 6, wherein the pivot bar comprises a vertically oriented bar having a cylindrical sleeve thereover.
8. The system of claim 2, wherein the inner end of the linkage is mounted to the rear of the vehicle.
9. The system of claim 2, wherein the inner end of the linkage is mounted to a side of the vehicle.

10. The system of claim 2, wherein the linkage arrangement is constructed and arranged to be biased toward a retracted position.
11. The system of claim 10, further comprising a biasing member to bias the linkage arrangement toward a retracted position.
12. The system of claim 2, wherein the linkage mounting arrangement is constructed and arranged to enable the linkage arrangement and the accessory to be extended to either a first side of the vehicle or a second side of the vehicle.
13. A system for mounting an accessory to a vehicle, comprising a linkage having a first, vertical axis of rotation and a second, horizontal axis of rotation, wherein the first axis is defined by a pivot member.
14. The system of claim 13, wherein the second axis is defined by vertically aligned pivot pins mounted within a pivot plate and mounting structure.
15. The system of claim 13, wherein a biasing member prevents the linkage from free rotation about the first and second axes.
16. A method of manicuring a lawn, comprising:
driving a vehicle having a mowing system and an accessory mounting system;
cutting vegetation with the mowing system;

when an object is encountered, gripping a handle of an accessory mounted to the accessory mounting system;

applying pressure to the handle to pivot the accessory toward the ground and away from the vehicle;

directing the accessory toward the object via the handle; and

cutting the vegetation surrounding the object with the accessory.

17. The method of claim 16, further comprising releasing the handle after using the accessory to return the accessory to a retracted position.

18. The method of claim 16, wherein the vehicle driver directs the accessory toward the object while remaining in the vehicle seat.

19. The method of claim 16, wherein the vehicle driver exits the vehicle to direct the accessory toward the object.